

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. All rejected claims have been either canceled or amended to depend on a claim that was deemed to recite allowable subject matter. The claims which were objected to have been amended to be in independent form, including the limitations of the claims on which they previously depended.

In the Final Office Action, claims 9-20 and 41 stand allowed. Claims 8, 31, 32, 39 and 40 stand objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but have been deemed to recite allowable subject matter. Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 21-30, 33-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on European patent application no. EP 0424071 of Peckham ("Peckham"). Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Peckham in view of U.S. Patent no. 6,480,823 of Zhao et al.

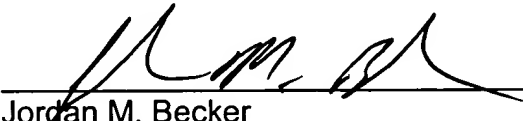
Claims 1, 6, 7, 21-25, 32, 33 and 38 have been canceled. Claims 2-5, 8, 26, 27, 30, 31, 34, 35 and 39 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

In particular, claim 8 (objected to) has been amended to incorporate limitations of claims 1 and 7 (canceled). Claim 31 (objected to) has been amended to incorporate limitations of claim 25 (canceled). Claim 39 (objected to) has been amended to incorporate limitations of claim 33 (canceled). All rejected claims have been either canceled or amended to depend on a claim that was deemed to recite allowable subject matter.

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly requested.

If any additional fee is required, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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